Through targeting these sectors, the plan strives to exploit the untapped potential in bilateral trade. It also focuses on special efforts towards developing new and fast growing areas of cooperation, such as information technology and biotechnology. It lays emphasis on promoting exports through participation in major trade shows and specific trade promotion events, apart from streamlining the information and data base of the Indian Embassy in USA to enable it to respond to trade enquiries in a timely and effective mannner. The Action Plan also incorporates close monitoring of, as well as liaison with the US authorities on, important bilateral trade related issues.

To further buttress these efforts, the two sides have agreed to set up India-US Commercial Dialogue, which was signed on 23-3-2000. The framework aims to (a) facilitate trade (b) maximise investment opportunities across a broad rang of economic sectors, including information technology, infrastructure, biotechnology, and services.

Industrial Production

2464. SHRI JIBON ROY : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that industrial production, though showing indication of revival, the production in capital goods items has not grown in the year 1999-2000; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN) : (a) and (b) According to the use based classification of the Index of Industrial Production, the growth rates of different sectors of industry for the period between 1995-96 (April—February) to 1999-2000 (April—February) are given in the table below :—

SECTOR–WISE GROWTH RATE (%)

Period	BASIC GOODS	CAPITAL GOODS	INTERMEDIATE GOODS	CONSUMER GOODS	OVERALL
1995-96	10.7	5.8	19.0	11.9	12.7
1996-97	3.1	10.0	8.3	5.7	5.8
1997-98	6.8	6.4	8.3	5.8	6.9
1998-99	1.5	11.9	5.8	2.2	3.8
1999-2000	5.3	5.4	14.0	5.6	7.9

The growth rate of the capital goods sector does not necessarily follow one to one correspondence with the aggregate growth rate in the industrial sector. The possible reasons for this are that demand for capital goods is lumpy in nature and triggered by improvements in the expectations of businessmen.

Government's Intervention in Tobacco Market

2465. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN :
SHRI N.R. DASARI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh State Government has urged the Central Government and the STC to intervene in the market to absorb surplus stocks of tobacco lying unsold in view of the glut in tobacco market; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government has decided that State Trading Corporation of India should commence market intervention operations for tobacco as was done last year, at the Andhra Pradesh tobacco auction platforms.

Clousre of Grasim Industries at Mavoor

2466. SHRI GAYA SINGH :
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) Whether Government are aware of the closure of the Birla group-owned Grasim Industries at Mavoor in North Kerala employing about 3000 people;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken, if any, by Government to settle the problem ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN) : (a) to (c) M/s. Grasim Industries Ltd., at Mavoor, North Kerala of the Birla Group has indicated in its production return in May 1999 that the machinery are under preventive maintenance and